

International Doctoral Research Awards (IDRC-IDRA)

FAQs

1. I am a doctoral student interested in the IDRA. Could you please send me information concerning this award?

All details concerning the IDRA are available in the guidelines, including the eligibility criteria, application deadline, and required documentation.

2. If I provide the title of my research proposal, could you tell me in advance if my project is aligned with IDRC's interests?

No. It is not possible to determine whether the research complies with IDRC's interests by reading a title or short summary alone. It is the applicant's responsibility to determine whether their research is relevant to IDRC's development outcome areas of interest. These areas are listed in the Eligibility section of the guidelines.

3. Before applying, can I contact IDRC or Universities Canada to discuss my research proposal and gain their input?

No. This would represent an unfair advantage and would place IDRC or Universities Canada in a position of conflict of interest.

4. Do I qualify for an IDRA if I am registered in a doctoral program but have not yet started my courses?

No. You must have completed several courses of the doctoral program, but not necessarily all courses, when you submit your application. The selection committee will need to see the transcripts of the doctoral courses completed to date, as well as the transcripts of your completed master's program, and all other documents listed in the Supporting Documentation section of the guidelines.

5. Do I need to have completed my comprehensive exams when applying for the award?

No, you do not need to complete all of your courses and comprehensive exams at the time of application.

If you are selected for an award, you will be asked to sign an Award Agreement. You have up to 12 months from the date indicated in the fully executed Award Agreement to start your field research.

6. Do I need to have candidacy status at the time of application?

You do not need to have candidacy status at the time of application. Note that if you are selected for an award, candidacy status must be confirmed before funding can be released.

7. What citizenship must I have in order to be eligible for an IDRA?

You must be a citizen or permanent resident of Canada, or a citizen of a country defined as ODA-eligible by the [OECD](#) Development Assistance Committee, in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

8. Can a part-time doctoral student apply for this award and receive it (if awarded) while still being part-time?

Part-time doctoral students are eligible to apply for the award, and receive it, if awarded (unless their university program rules otherwise), as long as it is understood that it is their responsibility to cover the fees outside of the scope of the award, as well as maintaining their university enrollment status.

9. I applied for an IDRA in the past but was not successful. Can I reapply?

If you were an unsuccessful applicant during a previous call and you meet all eligibility criteria, you may re-apply by submitting a new application, including all supporting documentation. Note that if you are selected for an award, you have up to 12 months to start your field research from the date of the fully executed Award Agreement.

Re-applicants whose research projects no longer fit IDRC development outcome areas will not be allowed to reapply.

Applicants who have previously been awarded an IDRC-IDRA, and who received funding, are not eligible to re-apply.

10. What needs to be provided in terms of ethical considerations?

If you are selected for an award, you will be required to provide official documentation confirming that you have received ethics approval from your Canadian university's ethics committee **and** the ethics committee in your country/countries of research. If ethics approval from your Canadian university is considered sufficient to conduct your research in the Southern country/countries, you must confirm this determination via official documentation from both the ethics board in the country/countries of research and your Canadian university.

This documentation is required in order for funding to be released. The minimum period of time required in the field, will only begin once ethics documentation is received.

11. I am a professor supervising a doctoral student who is eligible to apply for an IDRA. The guidelines indicate that the research supervisor should have "approved the research proposal" by the time of application. Do you mean that the student's proposal should have been formally approved by the university supervisory committee, or that the supervisor has read and approved the research proposal that the student intends to submit as part of their application?

The latter. It is expected that the applicant's research supervisor has read and approved the final version of the research proposal being submitted. This is to ensure that the research supervisor agrees with the proposal submitted, that he/she has made comments to the applicant and has ensured that the applicant has integrated these comments. We also want to ensure that the research supervisor is giving proper guidance to the applicant.

12. I would like to start my field research before the awards are announced. Is this possible?

Yes, but the award is not retroactive. Field research expenses will only be covered from the date indicated in the fully executed Award Agreement. If you are in the field when the results are announced, this award will not cover the used portion of your airfare or other research expenses incurred before the date of the fully executed Award Agreement. If you have finished your field research by the time the results are announced, you will no longer be eligible to receive the award.

13. How much time must I spend in the field?

If you are selected for an award, you have up to 12 months to start your field research from the date of the fully executed Award Agreement.

If your research involves one or more countries in one region, you must plan to spend minimum of 10 consecutive weeks in the field.

If your research involves more than one region, you must plan to spend a minimum of 5 consecutive weeks in *each* region.

The regions are: Middle East, North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, southern Africa, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Far East Asia, Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Oceania.

This award will cover research costs for a maximum of 52 weeks in the field.

NOTE: Please be realistic and prepare to be flexible in the proposed departure and return dates, as well as in the design of your field research.

14. What about travel advisories?

The [Government of Canada travel advisories](#) provide recommendations about safety and security conditions in destinations around the world, to help to make informed decisions. Applicants are responsible for the ongoing monitoring of the Government of Canada's travel advisories.

Applications for countries/regions categorized as level 2, asking to exercise a high degree of caution and level 3, asking to avoid non-essential travel, will be accepted. In the case of a level 3, the applicant's research supervisor will be asked to complete the section of the Research Supervisor Approval form outlining the key safety and security risks to the applicant, as well as the safety protocols and university process to mitigate any risks. This information must abide by the Government of Canada travel advisories as well as relevant COVID-19 protocols.

Applications for countries/regions categorized level 4, asking to avoid all travel, **will not be accepted**.

If you are selected for an award, and an advisory to "Avoid all travel" is issued thereafter for the country or region of your research, funding for your research will be put on hold.

If you are selected for an award and are a Canadian citizen, you will be required to register your international travel with the Government of Canada [Registration of Canadians Abroad \(ROCA\)](#) website in order for the Government of Canada to contact, protect and assist you in case of an emergency.

Travel insurance is mandatory. If you are selected for an award, proof of travel insurance (inclusive of medical coverage, hospitalization and repatriation) will need to be provided.

15. Are the application deadlines the same every year?

No, the application deadlines change annually.

16. You indicate that you will be announcing the results in November. What is the exact date?

The exact date is difficult to predict. Applicants will be notified by email no later than the last week of November.

17. What does it mean when an applicant receives a conditional award?

Receiving a conditional award means that you have been recommended for an award but on condition that you make changes to your proposal. You will have to respond to the selection committee's comments and the award will only be granted if your reply is satisfactory. Any delay in responding could delay the selection committee's final decision as well as your travel dates.

18. Can the IDRA be used to cover doctoral tuition fees?

No, this award cannot be used to pay university tuition fees. It is not a scholarship; it is a field research award.

19. How can this award be used?

This award covers field research expenses for advanced doctoral students who intend to conduct their field research in one or more countries in the Global South. Funds may be used to collect data and samples in the field, conduct interviews or surveys with local populations, and organize focus groups or workshops. Applicants must use findings from their field research to write their doctoral thesis. You are not eligible for this award if you intend to use it only to analyze or disseminate final results, finalize videos, or spend time in a lab.

20. My total research costs will most likely exceed the CA\$20,000 that IDRC offers. Can I look for additional funding outside IDRC?

Yes, however, the budget section of your application must indicate which field research expenses you intend to cover with the IDRA and which you intend to cover from other funding sources. It is your responsibility to ensure that your other sources of funding allow you to accept the IDRA.

21. Can I use the IDRA for different field research trips?

If you outlined more than one trip in your application and the selection committee agreed with your reasons for additional trip(s), you may use the award to cover the related field research expenses (housing, local transportation, interpretation, etc.). However, please be aware that only one airfare from Canada to a country or region of research will be covered. You must cover any airfare related to other trips to and from Canada to another country or region of research. If you fly from one region directly to another (e.g. West Africa to Central America), IDRC will cover the flight out and the return home, but you must cover the flight between regions. (NB: In-country or in-region flights during field research are considered eligible research expenses.). Note that if you use the IDRA for different field research trips, you must plan to spend a minimum of 10 consecutive weeks in the field when your research involves one or more countries in one region. When your research involves more than one region, you must plan to spend a minimum of five consecutive weeks in the field in *each* region.

The regions are: Middle East, North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, southern Africa, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Far East Asia, Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Oceania.

22. I am a nursing mother or a single custodial parent. May I use funds to cover my child's airfare, that of a caregiver, or childcare expenses?

A nursing mother or a single custodial parent can include childcare or babysitting expenses in the budget, but no airfare or related travel expenses (for a child or an accompanying caregiver). The

allowable cost is limited to overnight childcare costs, as reasonable and applicable in Canada or in the country of research (i.e. where the child is residing for the duration of the parent's travel).

23. Will I be required to provide receipts for the costs accrued during my research?

If you are selected for an award, you will be required to provide all receipts except for housing and food/household supplies. You will also be required to provide the invoice confirming payment for the airfare, with a copy of the tickets and boarding passes.

24. What if I am selected for an award but my visa is delayed?

There are some exceptional circumstances in which applicants cannot leave for the field when planned because of visa difficulties, health problems, or other reasons. If such a situation arises, send Universities Canada a written explanation and additional documentation (photocopy of your visa request, medical certificate, etc.). To avoid delays, please ensure that you request any necessary visa(s) as early as possible.

25. Where do I find the online application form?

Eligible applicants can apply online here:

https://portal.scholarshippartners.ca/welcome/IDRCIDRA_En/

26. Do I have to complete the entire IDRA application at once, or can I complete some sections, upload some documents, save them, and continue later?

The online application may be completed gradually. You may upload one document at a time, save, and continue later. Please make sure click the to "Save Draft" before navigating away from the application. To submit your application, click on the "Submit" button. **Applications should be submitted at least one or two days before the deadline. Volume of submissions on the day of the deadline may cause delays or technical difficulties and the application deadline will not be extended.**

27. Whom should I contact if I have a technical problem with my online application?

Contact idrcidra.crdibird@univcan.ca to alert us to the problem. Support is available during ET working hours from Monday to Friday, but not on weekends or Canadian statutory holidays. Please note that we cannot guarantee a response to technical issues that arise during the last two days before the deadline.

28. One of my professors has not completed the Recommendation form on time. Consequently, I have not been able to hit the "Submit" button by the deadline. Can the Recommendation form still be uploaded to my application and submitted after the deadline?

Applicants are responsible for starting their online application several weeks before the deadline to ensure adequate time to fulfill all requirements. This includes allowing professors sufficient time to complete the Recommendation form. If the Recommendation form has not been completed, the applicant will not be able to submit their application.

29. May my Recommendation forms be submitted directly to Universities Canada in order to maintain confidentiality?

Yes. If preferred, Recommendation forms may be sent by the professor or research supervisor to idrcidra.crdibird@univcan.ca where it will be internally uploaded to the student's application.

30. I was not able to submit my final document(s) to apply for an IDRA, may I submit them by email? Will you accept my late application?

We are unable to accept documentation via email (except for the recommendation forms, as noted above). All documents must be submitted through the online application portal. Incomplete applications will not be considered, and late applications will NOT be accepted.

31. I was working on the system close to the deadline when it suddenly shut down. What can I do?

The system shuts down at the exact deadline time indicated in the guidelines. There is no grace period. The system will not allow you to save what you wrote past the deadline. If this occurs, we invite you to apply for the next call.